



# INFANT - supporting children to thrive in the early years

INFANT is an effective, universal intervention that enhances existing family and child health services, helping families with young children to establish optimal feeding, nutrition, active play and reduced screen time in the early years.

INFANT has reached 12,000 families with new babies so far. Government investment for the national expansion of INFANT ensures that all Australian families have access to foundational support to raise healthy, happy children right from the start of life. The national expansion of INFANT over five years can reach up to 300,000 new parents/carers each year including priority populations.

## Health, social and economic benefits to families and the health system

- Participating in INFANT has positive health effects for children at age 2, sustained at ages 3.5 and 5 with increased fruit, vegetable and water intake, reduced screen time and 1.7 serve reduction in discretionary (snack) food per week.
- Health economic modelling shows a one serve reduction in discretionary food per week results in approximately \$1.298 billion savings in healthcare costs during a lifetime, and could prevent more than 50,000 cases of type 2 diabetes and 20,000 cases of heart disease nationally.
- Parents engaged with INFANT were less likely to seek advice on feeding, activity or growth across the first nine months of life from health services including parent helpline, GPs and paediatricians, with significant health cost savings estimated at \$6.9 million annually from fewer GP and paediatrician visits alone.



### More information:

[infantprogram.org](http://infantprogram.org) | [INFANT-study@deakin.edu.au](mailto:INFANT-study@deakin.edu.au) | +61 3 9244 5574  
Institute for Physical Activity and Nutrition (IPAN), Deakin University, Australia

\*References available separately on request



Deakin University CRICOS Provider Code 00113B

## Access for priority populations and cultural groups

- Engages priority groups including First Nations and culturally diverse families, with 'easy English' resources at age-based stages of child growth.
- Translation and cultural adaption of INFANT parent booklets and videos in 6 community languages – Arabic, Chinese, Hindu, Punjabi, Urdu & Vietnamese.

Supports women during pregnancy and the early years, a critical period for health, social and emotional wellbeing, by enhancing social connections, parenting confidence and reducing parental stress.

## Streamlined intervention through group support and accessible app technology

- Embedded low-cost digital technologies, such as the evidence-based INFANT app, provide parents with trusted advice 24/7.
- Online training for health professionals to deliver group sessions, which boosts practitioner confidence and reinforces crucial key messages around nutrition, active play, and screen time throughout their practice.

## Laying the foundation for health and wellbeing in the early years

- Timely support for parents with four group sessions provided by trained health professionals, together with the INFANT app and evidence-based resources.
- Builds social and community connection between parents during a time of new challenges and life changes, via group-based parenting support.
- Early support is available through the INFANT app, including breastfeeding support which has been found to be acceptable and useful, particularly for women with lower levels of education.
- Also improves mothers' dietary intakes, as role models for their child's health behaviours.

### INFANT (Infant Feeding, Active play & NuTrition):

*A world-leading program to support parents with a new baby, INFANT was developed by researchers from the Institute for Physical Activity and Nutrition (IPAN), Deakin University, and is supported by over 15 years of research.*

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